

Today's News - Tuesday, September 18, 2012

- Just as aesthetics and sustainability were taking hold in U.S. embassy design criteria, current events could turn things back to a "bunker mentality" (a fascinating history lesson as well).
- On its first anniversary, Massey and Snyder "survey the physical and online protest spaces" of OWS.
- Calthorpe on the "urban reckoning" that may befall China if it continues to make the "same mistake America made" using "outdated Western planning ideas that put its cars at the center of urban life, rather than its people."
- Williams, on the other hand, finds that "for all its problems," China's "palpable sense of experimentation...is refreshing," making it "one of the most exciting places to be at the moment."
- Bryan Bell calls for "a clear set of professional standards" if public interest design is to move beyond being a movement to a new "valued field of professional practice."
- Bernstein on the new burst of interest in micro-units in cities from coast to coast, but "not everyone is on the micro-bandwagon."
- Denari wins big in Taiwan with his design for a "Gateway to the Nation" (lots of pix).
- Lubell sees promise in three finalists' designs for Los Angeles's Sixth Street Viaduct with designs that "not only showcase memorable forms, but embrace people-friendly designs."
- Brussat's hopes are revived with the redesign of a "controversial upscale apartment complex" that will turn "an ugly mistake" into "a model for civilized change."
- Q&A with Joel Sanders re: "landscape and man-made dualisms in architecture."
- Northwestern University is gearing up for a big-time design competition to replace Goldberg's Prentice hospital - providing Chicago gives the go-ahead for demolition, of course.
- Steffes offers Part 2 of his lively history of Chicago's (mostly gone) shoreline motels (great images).
- As the second annual Detroit Design Festival gets ready to kick off tomorrow, its organizers explain how "its long-term potential is even greater."
- Eyefuls of the inaugural Innovation By Design Awards: "Spaces entries were superb."
- Deadline reminder: Call for entries: Gowanus by Design's Water_Works Open Design and Planning Competition.

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Bunker Mentality: Can the U.S. keep diplomats safe without turning embassies into fortresses? ...the age of relative innocence in embassy design ended in 1983...Aesthetics are clearly not a priority in the post-9/11 era...The pendulum has begun to swing the other way...It's still too early to say whether this week's attacks will shift the State Department's priorities back toward security... By Joshua Keating -- Jane Loeffler; Martin Filler; Walter Gropius; Edward Durrell Stone; KieranTimberlake; Eero Saarinen; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); AIA- Foreign Policy magazine

Occupying Wall Street: Places and Spaces of Political Action: One year ago Occupy Wall Street set up camp in Zuccotti Park...activists were deploying digital media to connect the movement globally. Jonathan Massey and Brett Snyder survey the physical and online protest spaces... + Mapping Liberty Plaza [images, links]- Places Journal

Weapons of Mass Urban Destruction: China's cities are making the same mistake America made on the path to superpower status...based on outdated Western planning ideas that put its cars at the center of urban life, rather than its people...the Chinese urban reckoning will be even more severe than America's. By Peter Calthorpe/Calthorpe Associates - Foreign Policy magazine

China: The progress of an emerging superpower undergoing the largest urbanisation project in human history: In an era where risk aversion is the norm, the palpable sense of experimentation that permeated Modernism, and abounds in modern China, is refreshing. That is why, for all its problems, it is one of the most exciting places to be at the moment. By Austin Williams - Architectural Review (UK)

Public Interest Design Takes Shape: ...it's becoming clear that we now have a movement, not just a collection of well-documented projects and well-meaning people. This is a new field of practice...If [it] is going to grow...into a valued field of professional practice, we need...a clear set of professional standards that the public can trust. By Bryan Bell -- Social Economic Environmental Design (SEED) Network; AIA-Metropolis Magazine

Cities Court Creatives with Micro-Units: Developers see a profitable niche in these tiny units...aimed at tech-savvy 20-somethings (a group that seems willing to trade bedwidth for bandwidth)...Not everyone is on the micro-bandwagon. By Fred A. Bernstein -- adAPT NYC [slide show]- Architectural Record

Denari Takes Keelung: ...won the challenge everyone is talking about: the international competition to design the Keelung Harbor Service Project in Taiwan...will become the "Gateway to the Nation," developing unused waterfront land... By Sam Lubell -- Neil Denari Architects [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Visions of shortlisted to create the city's new Sixth Street Viaduct: Three finalists present plans for major new bridge in Los Angeles...will likely be LA's next major icon...not only showcased memorable forms, but embraced people-friendly designs...Such moves are a welcome, if uphill battle considering that so much of the city has been designed for cars, not people. By Sam Lubell -- HNTB/Michael Maltzan Architecture/AC Martin/Hargreaves Associates; AECOM; Parsons Brinckerhoff [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

New look for project on Thayer Street: ...seems to have dodged the latest institutional-creep bullet...controversial upscale apartment complex for Brown grad students...has been redesigned, turning an ugly mistake into a lovely one...can now serve as a model for civilized change...All that said, the project still does represent a failure of the city's planning process. By David Brussat -- Union Studio Architecture & Community Design [images]- Providence Journal (Rhode Island)

To be grounded: Joel Sanders and Timothy Moore discuss landscape and man-made dualisms in architecture..."Groundwork: Between Landscape and Architecture," written with Diana Balmori, also looks at the construction of stereotypes, this time in the binary of landscape and building... - ArchitectureAU (Australia)

Northwestern to launch design contest for Prentice successor: Preservationist argues university should reuse 'world-class' design it already has: If the city allows demolition of the old Prentice Women's Hospital, Northwestern University will launch an international design competition in 2013 to build a biomedical research facility worthy of replacing architect Bertrand Goldberg's masterpiece. - Chicago Tribune

Chicago's Shoreline Motels – North: ...may have seemed more appropriate for Miami Beach than the Midwest's often-chilly shoreline. Recently discovered renderings, photos and ephemera...illustrate this long-gone era when many motels were (at least initially) independent, site-specific, and reflected the often quirky, period, and optimistic tastes of their local developers and architects. By Patrick Steffes [images]- Forgotten Chicago

Detroit Design on a grand scale: In only its second year, the Detroit Design Festival [September 19-23] has become one of the city's top must-see, must-do happenings. That sounds great, but organizers Matt Clayson and Melinda Anderson tell Walter Wasacz its longterm potential is even greater. - Model D (Detroit)

Inaugural Innovation By Design Awards, honoring the year's best designs: ...a showcase for inspiring, ingenious design solutions...Spaces entries were superb... David Adjaye; Steven Holl; James Corner Field Operations/Diller Scofidio + Renfro/Piet Oudolf; Solid Objectives-Idenburg Liu (SO-IL); Sheehan Partners; Ball-Nogues [images]- Fast Company

Deadline reminder: Call for entries: Gowanus by Design's Water_Works Open Design and Planning Competition; cash prizes; registration deadline: October 19- Gowanus by Design



- Ken Price Sculpture: A Retrospective, LACMA, Los Angeles
- Exhibition: "Palladio Virtuel," Yale School of Architecture Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut
- Keith Williams Architects: The Novium, Chichester, UK

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